

## **It's All About the Committee**

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I had the great pleasure of chairing this week's YWCA Leader Luncheon Women of Achievement. "It takes a village" is not so far-fetched when it comes to overseeing an event that garnered almost 800 attendees to honor women and organizations in our community who were inspired from the speech by internationally recognized speaker Naomi Tutu. In this case, it took a strong committee.

Many of us are asked on a regular basis to volunteer in committee work. The challenge in persuading people to participate on a committee is convincing them that their involvement will not take too much of their time but it is coveted. Here are some basic "DO's" to help structure your next committee:

- DO develop a project timeline. Give potential committee members an organized roadmap and a game plan.
- DO hold "only-necessary" meetings within a limited time. With the Internet, cell phones and other gadgets these days, there's little that can't be done outside of actual meetings. But when you do hold meetings, start them on time and, most importantly, end them on time. Respect individuals' time and they will continue to be involved.
- DO have specific, but limited tasks. Assign your committee members activities so they don't feel overwhelmed but still feel their involvement is making a difference.
- DO thank committee members - before, during and after. While individuals are taking time to volunteer for your committee, you should make the time to express your appreciation for their involvement. Sincere compliments and appreciation go a long way to ensure committee members stay engaged.

Again, most people don't participate in committee activities because they feel it will take up too much of their time. If you can show them that their involvement is appreciated and crucial without overtaking their lives, you may have dedicated committee members for life.